

Application No. 9/854,733
Amendment "A" dated January 4, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed October 29, 2005

REMARKS

Applicants express appreciation to the Examiner for the interview conducted with applicants' representative. At the interview, four new independent claims were proposed as replacements for independent claims 1, 12, 24, 35, 45 and 46, which are the independent claims previously pending under the Office Action.¹ As noted in the interview summary, "applicant proposed new independent claims to more clearly focus on the viewer's ability to add EPG information during browser mode by adding EPG information slice-by-slice in response to viewer activated commands. This appears to define over the rejection and the prior art of record subject to further search and consideration upon receipt of an official response."

Accordingly, by this paper the new independent claims as presented and discussed at the interview have been added. Thus independent claims 51 and 52 (with depending claims 53 -- 59) and 61 and 62 (with depending claims 63 -- 72) are presented for reconsideration. Claims 52 and 62 are computer program product claims that otherwise correspond to the method as claimed in independent claims 51 and 52, respectively.

In the Office Action the claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,577,350 (Proehl et al.).² As noted and discussed, Proehl et al. teaches that a viewer may get lost when switching between programs and EPGs, hence it is desirable to provide a way to visually connect the current program to the EPG displaying an entry of the current program. Col. 1 lines 32 -- 36. The method disclosed in Proehl et al. provides a visual link between the program being viewed and the EPG by performing a zoom which causes the program to be alpha-blended behind the program guide (col. 1 lines 50 -- 57), as illustrated in fig. 8. Proehl et al. further discloses that when a viewer desires to view multiple levels of detail of the EPG, the viewer zooms out, thus increasing the amount of information in the EPG that is viewable.

¹ Claim 33 was also previously pending, but as pointed out by applicants' representative at the interview, that claim should have been included with the claims of group II that were withdrawn from consideration, and thus applicants hereby confirm withdrawal of claims 33 -- 34 as included in the claims of group II.

² Proehl et al. qualifies as "prior" art, if at all, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Applicants reserve the right to challenge the status of Proehl et al. as a qualifying reference, and thus any remarks or argument in regard to Proehl et al. is made merely assuming for purposes of the argument that the reference is a qualifying reference.

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As noted at the interview, Proehl et al. does not use a browse mode, but rather operates simply using full mode, e.g. the complete EPG is operated upon and the amount of information is controlled simply by zooming in or zooming out on the full EPG.

In contrast, applicants claimed method and computer program product define a method for display of electronic program guide information to a viewer while viewing a television program, wherein the electronic program guide information is organized in various slices each containing at least a channel identifier and a program element for a given time element, and *wherein the viewer selectively determines how to expand the program guide information when initially presented to the viewer in browse mode so as to present additional program guide information.* As defined in the claims, the method comprises steps for retrieving from an electronic program guide at least *a first slice of program guide information, displaying in browse mode the retrieved slice in a window that is simultaneously presented for viewing with a displayed television program, in response to a viewer-activated command that is initiated, adding one additional slice of program guide information to said browse mode window; and the viewer selectively continuing to add another additional slice of program guide information to said browse mode window each time a viewer-activated command is initiated, until a pre-defined number of slices is reached.*³

Applicants' claimed method and computer program product are clearly different from Proehl et al. in the sense that Proehl et al. nowhere teaches using individual slices of an EPG which can be selectively added or removed from a browser, as opposed to simply zooming in or zooming out on the entire EPG. Thus, as presented herein the independent claims are neither anticipated nor made obvious by Proehl et al. or any other prior art of record, either singly or in combination. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

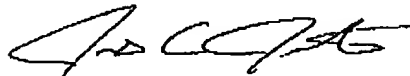
³ See independent claims 51 and 52. Independent claims 61 and 62 are similar, except that those claims add the further steps for adding additional time elements so that as additional slices of EPG information are added to the browse mode window, they correspond to a particular time element. This permits the viewer to scroll the browse mode window on a time period-by-time period basis.

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In the event the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to allowance that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 4th day of January, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



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